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Technologization of Global Citizenship Education as Response to Challenges of Globalization

Guest Editor

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Cultural, linguistic, and economic exchanges between communities, including nations, are as old as civilization itself, but only recently did such exchanges receive an appropriate and universally recognized name: globalization. Naming the process caused a significant shift in how globalization came to be perceived, and it has become an important issue in political agendas, economic policies, and cultural aspirations. In other words, globalization helped shape and refine debates about global interconnections and interdependence, universality of human rights, and the importance of economic and social justice.

Education, too, has been on the receiving end of globalization, but due to its traditionalistic nature, its response has been slower and more muted than that of economy, culture, or ideology. Along with the developments in international and global education, the emergence of global citizenship education (GCE) is one such response. The irony is that citizenship education developed historically as a means to raise and educate the young with the specific values and norms of the region or nation; in other words, to create national citizens loyal to the existing polity. This semantic twist is probably one of a number of reasons why many educators are still skeptical about GCE, which is a relatively new area of education. The traditional prevalence of the idea that citizenship only refers to national citizenship, confusion between citizenship as a legal concept and citizenship as belonging and membership (which is the subject of citizenship education), lack of a clear definition of global citizenship on the one hand and an array of characteristics that scholars usually attribute to it on the other, and erroneously understood patriotism are among the obstacles to a wider use of GCE frameworks in schools. Despite a growing number of empirical studies (Davies, Harber, & Yamashita, 2005; Merryfield, 2008; Rapoport, 2013, 2015; Sant, Davies, Pashby, & Schultz, 2018), educators and

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education theorists are still at the initial stage of developing a methodological basis for teaching global citizenship.

Despite ongoing debates and skepticism regarding global citizenship (Koyama, 2015; Standish, 2012; Wood, 2008), global citizenship education has gained significant momentum in the last decade (Harshman, 2015; Maguth & Hilburn, 2015). The increase in the use of global citizenship frameworks in the classroom resulted in the steady growth of empirical analytical studies directed at codifying specific methodologies and teaching devices to improve global citizenship education.

Research on a methodological approach in various areas of education, including GCE, demonstrated the importance of technology along with mediation and teacher agency. Advances in technology, particularly information and communication technology, and burgeoning online communication have been both reasons and results of globalization. The emergence of digital citizenship was another response to globalization. According to Mossberger, Tolbert, and McNeal (2008), digital citizens are those who use technology on a daily basis, use technology for political information to fulfill their civic duty, and use technology at work for economic gain. During the end of the last century and the first decade of the present one, scholars, politicians, and journalists foresaw tremendous opportunities for new technologies in the development of civic society and citizenship. They believed that new, easily obtained information available to everyone would help citizens become more knowledgeable about politics and more willing to participate in political processes; communication technologies would provide platforms for open discussion of social, political, or ideological problems; and citizens would have direct access to authorities, which could make the democratic process more open and governments more accountable. In the same vein, technologies expanded the horizons for the development of citizens' participation, even though full participation has been severely stifled by the lack of educational and technological competences or access to communication technology due to poverty or restrictive policies.

A positive impact of new communication technologies on the development of global citizenship has been one of the daring promises of the new millennium. The burgeoning use of technology has led to a plethora of research on how technology influences youth engagement,

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civic knowledge, and skills, presenting evidence of the benefits, obstacles, and potential detriments of the use of technology in citizenship education. The last decade, however—specifically after 2016—witnessed a more cautious approach to the use of technology in the social sphere, particularly as a medium of communication, including global communication. Private, corporate, and government users realized that, as Charles White, one of the authors in this issue, put it: "technology is a tool, and its effects on global citizenship education depend on who uses the technology, how it is employed, and for what purpose."

There is little doubt that radical changes in the last several decades have been stimulated by unprecedented progress in technology and globalization. Education, including citizenship education, has fully experienced the impact of both the former and the latter. Global citizenship education, however, remains an area that is still on the edge of academic interest among scholars and practitioners who study the interaction between education and technology. GCE, which is itself an unsettled and disputed part of citizenship curricula, nevertheless provides many opportunities to document and analyze the role and place of technology and social networks in growing youth social and civic activism caused by globalization

This special issue of RESSAT, **The Impact of Technology on Global Citizenship Education,** brings together scholars whose research addresses the challenges in citizenship education, global education, and educational and information technologies. The volume starts with the article **Wielding Social Media in the Cyber-Arena: Globalism, Nationalism, and Civic Education** by Charles S. White, the Executive Director of the Social Science Education Consortium in Rockland, Massachusetts. Drawing from current research and news reporting on methods and effects of online manipulation and propaganda, the author argues that in our globalizing world, technology can be used as a tool for good and a tool for harm. Globalization has produced significant benefits to the world community, both economic and social, but they have come at a cost. Among the losers are those economically displaced persons whose manufacturing jobs moved elsewhere; they are resentful of foreigners and fearful of an uncertain future. For them, global citizenship is anathema, and they are susceptible to manipulation by malign forces eager to exploit any perceived rifts in the post-war world order. Global processes require active and

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productive engagement of the young within the emerging global community. Technology *could* play a positive role in effective global citizenship education. Identifying how technology can be employed positively in GCE is important, but not enough. The article concludes by describing international efforts to defend against social media assaults on democracy and by identifying the new knowledge and skills citizens must acquire for positive civic engagement in the global cyber-arena.

Digital exchanges and digital dialogue are becoming more prevalent in teachers' informal professional learning and promote participants' sense of belonging. Twitter has been used as an important medium for professional expression and professional learning. In **A Window, Mirror, and Wall: How Educators Use Twitter for Professional Learning,** Elizabeth Sturm (Lewis University) and Laura Quaynor (Johns Hopkins University) report on a study of educators' discourse in two hosted Twitter chats focused on global education and analyze the ways in which these types of chats align with research on high-quality professional learning. Teacher exchanges focused on global education exhibited multiple characteristics of high-quality professional learning that included a focus on content, active learning and collaboration, and teacher agency; to a lesser extent, they provided peer coaching and allowed for sustained conversations. The study demonstrates that there is room for additional research on the feedback cycle and on how engagement with new resources translates into actual transformative classroom practices.

Michael Kopish (Ohio State University) and Welisson Marques (Instituto Federal do Triângulo Mineiro, Uberaba, Brazil) present an exploratory case study of a transnational, collaborative curricular project for pre-service teachers in the United States and Brazil. Their article **Leveraging Technology to Promote Global Citizenship in Teacher Education in the United States and Brazil** describes a partnership to promote collaborative activities in curriculum and instruction, scholarship and research, and for student and faculty exchanges guided by critical pedagogy and social justice approaches to global citizenship education. The authors demonstrate the extent to which the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) approach facilitated pre-service teachers' development of global competencies and ability to employ emerging technologies for learning.

The idea that technology is disrupting traditional norms and practices has long been prevalent in many spheres of human activity, including education. The article **Re/coding Global Citizenship: How Information and Communication Technologies have Altered Humanity and Created New Questions for Global Citizenship Education** by Gabriel Swarts (St. Bonaventure University) addresses three key challenges that GCE teachers and scholars face in the attempt to "re/code" the field in the information age: a) how humans engage with global issues and concerns, b) the role of governments and citizenship status in a "disrupted" age, and c) the role of technology corporations in the delivery and control of globalized media. To answer these questions, the author invites readers to discuss how information and communication technologies are changing the landscape, and how global citizenship education must open new spaces for conversations and the future of the field.

In 2017, the International Bureau of Education (IBE) put forth a set of capacity-building competences reflecting the means to prepare students for the shifting needs of industry while developing skills needed for interacting in a globalized context. A group of researchers from Pepperdine University (Danielle P. Espino, Seung B. Lee, Lauren Van Tress, Toby T. Baker, and Eric R. Hamilton) examined the reflection of these competences in a project that addressed UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Targets 4.4 and 4.7 to build on both relevant skillsets and global citizenship in a learning context. The project involved collaborative STEM-focused media making by adolescent participants from various countries in an informal, global makerspace environment. In **Analysis of U.S., Kenyan, and Finnish Discourse Patterns in a Cross-cultural Digital Makerspace Learning Community Through the IBE-UNESCO Global Competences Framework**, the authors explore the interactive role of media making, cross-cultural engagement, and collaborative learning in the development of global competences in students who worked together both asynchronously, using email or Slack, and synchronously through video conference calls known as online global meet-ups. The study concludes that across the meet-up, participants helped each other develop key competences that support the importance of considering this media making, boundary-crossing, collaborative environment in learning and building global competences.

We hope this volume will draw the attention of theorists and practitioners who are interested in citizenship education, social studies education, global and international education, comparative education, and the role and place of technology in education and civic life.

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